

LIFE MAPS

All of us have a story to tell . . . it's the story of what God has done in your life. A Life Map¹, or a testimony, is one way to think about telling your story. It's a great way to have group members share their personal histories and talk about how God has worked in their lives.

Life Map Components

“History”

This is the story of your life. It includes biographical information, past life experiences, and significant moments of your life. It can't include every detail of your life, but it should include current realities and how God has brought you to where you are today.

“High Times”

These can be the joyful, exciting times in life. It can be marked by marriages or births, blessings, opportunities, joy, celebrations, accomplishments, rewards, gifts, relationships and transformation.

“Hard Times”

These are difficult or challenging seasons or stages of life. These might be marked by loss, grief, sorrow, disappointment, depression, isolation, rejection, heartache, challenge, confusion, suffering or illness. These times are often seasons of growth and maturity followed by High times as well as seeing or experiencing the Hand of God in your life.

“Heroes”

These are the people that have significantly influenced your life. A hero might be a parent or grandparent, friend, mentor, teacher, coach, missionary or pastor. These people are the men and women who have lasting impact on your life and have shaped you in some specific way.

“Hand of God”

This is where God's power and presence can clearly be seen in your life. It may show up, or be more visible, at various times in your life, or may be a consistent visible presence. This would include times where you are very aware of God's protection, provision, presence, discipline, deliverance, or sanctifying work.

¹ This resource has been adapted from Cru.

Suggested Parameters for Life Maps

Appropriate Vulnerability

Not every aspect of your life should be revealed or communicated when you share your Life Map. This is particularly true in a mixed group. Members should be encouraged and coached on how to share both vulnerably and appropriately.

Brief but Thorough

There should be a specific time frame established to share your Life Map. It's necessary to give ample time for each person to share, but it's necessary to limit that time frame as well. 20-25 minutes seems ample for sharing a Life Map with 5-10 minutes given for follow up questions by the group.

Listen Well

Life Maps are personal and revealing. Be sure the group is listening well, that interruptions or disruptions are limited, and that people feel safe when it comes time to sharing their Life Map.

Preparation

It's vital that each person prepares a visual map or outline in preparation for sharing with the group. It's too easy to ramble or get caught in frivolous details if there is not ample preparation for sharing your Life Map.

Allow Room for Diversity and Differences

Not everyone is an artist. Not everyone is a public speaker. Not everyone feels safe sharing the details of their life. The goal is not to force everyone into the same box but to give everyone the opportunity to share their life story with the group. Everyone's approach will be a little different.

Confidentiality

It's important to protect each other when vulnerable and specific details of life are shared. It's important the group members know their stories will not be shared on the internet/social media or inappropriately with others.

Building Blocks

As you share your stories with one another, it provides a great foundation upon which to grow alongside each other, to pray for one another, and to encourage each other in your journey with Christ.